

Purpose

To contrast, through the kings of Israel and Judah, the lives of those who live for God and those who don't

Penman

Unknown — possibly Jeremiah or a group of prophets

Setting

Once great nation of Israel, now divided physically and spiritually

Key People

David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Jeroboam, Elijah, Ahab, and Jezebel

Key Places

Shechem, Israel, Judah, Jerusalem, Dan, Bethel, Tizrah, Samaria, Mount Carmel, Jezreel, and Ramoth-Gilead

Special Feature

1 Kings and *2 Kings* were originally one book

Key Verses

"As for you, if you will follow Me with integrity and godliness, then I will establish Israel forever. For I made this promise to your father, David: 'You will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.' "

1 Kings 9:4, 5

An Overview (22 Chapters)

- The United Kingdom (*1:1-11:43*)
- The Divided Kingdom (*12:1-22:53*)

Major Themes

- *The King*: Wisdom, power, and achievement do not ultimately come from any human source; they are from God. No matter what we lead or govern, we can't do well if we ignore God's guidelines. Whether or not we are leaders, effectiveness depends upon listening and obeying God's Word. Don't let your personal desires distort God's Word.
- *The Temple*: A beautiful house of worship doesn't always guarantee heartfelt worship of God. Providing opportunities for true worship doesn't ensure that it will happen. God wants to live in our hearts, not just meet us in a sanctuary.
- *Other Gods*: We tend to become what we worship. Through the years, the people of God took on the false qualities of the false gods they worshiped. They became cruel, power-hungry, and sexually perverse. Unless we serve the true God, we will become slaves to whatever takes His place.
- *The Prophets*: The prophets' responsibility was to confront and correct any deviation from God's law. The Bible, the truths in sermons, and the wise counsel of believers are warnings to us. Anyone who points out how we deviate from obeying God's Word is a blessing to us. Changing our lives in order to obey God and get back on track often takes painful discipline and hard work.